

ADDRESS

AT THE

OPENING OF THE SESSION (1854-55)

OF

MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE, LONDON;

DELIVERED AT UNIVERSITY HALL,

OCTOBER 9th, 1854.

BY

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Principal.

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ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,—It has been resolved by the Committee of Manchester New College, that every session shall open with a public address by one of the Professors. I think the resolution an exceedingly judicious one. Such an address gives a becoming formality and recognition to the resumption of our academic labours; enables us to pause for a moment ere we commence our work anew, and throw a retrospective glance over the past, as well as one of anticipation into the future; and furnishes a suitable occasion for bringing our Institution in its actual condition, with its reasonable prospects and with its remaining wants, distinctly before the view of that portion of the public who take an interest in its welfare. The task of addressing you, Gentlemen, this year devolves on me; and I proceed to say a few words on some bearings of the important work in which we are engaged—that of providing for the perpetuation of an enlightened, instructed, earnest and effective Christian ministry amongst us. Our last session, the first after the transference of our Institution to a new locality, was one of much anxiety and painful responsibility to all who were engaged in conducting it, and attended with difficulties and embarrassments, inseparable from the rapid introduction of so great a change, which none but those who actually encountered them can adequately appreciate. On the whole, I believe we may congratulate ourselves that the first year's results of this great experiment (for so it was regarded by many sincere well-wishers to the College) have proved satisfactory. The annual examination gave evidence, in the opinion of competent and impartial judges, of successful industry and promising ability. We are all of us, professors and students alike, bound to express our grateful acknowledgments to our London friends for the kind welcome and cordial sympathy with which they received us, comparative strangers, amongst them; and more especially to Dr. Carpenter, the ex-

cellent Principal of University Hall, for his prompt readiness on all occasions to co-operate with the professors of Manchester New College in every measure calculated to cement the union and promote the harmony of the two Institutions. Satisfied as we have every reason to be with the general good conduct, and attention to their duties, of the students of last session, my colleagues and myself express our earnest hope that the gentlemen who yet remain with us, and those who now join them for the first time, will still, by their assiduity in study and the spirit of their whole conduct, zealously second the efforts of their instructors to fulfil the high purposes of our Institution, and to justify the confidence which the public seems increasingly disposed to place in us.

From the time of its foundation in 1786, Manchester New College, inheriting in this respect the spirit of its immediate predecessor at Warrington, has ever proposed to itself, as one of its leading objects, the education of what is called a *learned* Christian ministry; that is to say, of men who are qualified to interpret with exactness the primitive documents of the Christian faith in their original languages, who have thoroughly and systematically studied the grand epochs of Christian history, illustrated from the sources of early Christian literature, and who have passed through such a discipline of moral and religious philosophy, as will enable them to trace back the speculative controversies which still divide the Christian world, to their root and principle in the organic working and historical development of the human mind,—in contradistinction from men who, taking the overt facts of the religious life as they lie on the surface of our daily experience, and applying to them the obvious doctrines of the gospel as they stand out prominently from the teaching of Christ and his apostles, devote themselves exclusively to a practical cultivation of piety and goodness in the hearts and lives of simple and unlearned men, without going into those wider and deeper questions which excite the interest and occupy the thoughts of the more educated classes, and which need a higher culture and a more scientific discipline of the mind for their satisfactory treatment and proximate solution. Now I admit most entirely that there is room in the world for both these kinds of religious teachers; that they are even mutually necessary, in the present state of society, to supplement each other's exertions; and that, without a large infusion of the influences derivable from the popular experience of the latter class, the most thorough scientific culture will not accomplish its object in the religious teaching of mankind. But with this concession, most freely made, what I now wish briefly to insist upon, in opposition to some prevailing misconceptions on the subject, is the importance, the absolute necessity, to the maintenance of the social position of our religious body, and of

its healthy action on the public sentiment of our country, of the high mental culture of a very large proportion of our future ministers. Because the first preachers of the gospel were unlettered men, and—by the aid, be it remembered, of God's spirit, then more powerfully and more directly in action than at any other period within the records of human history—made an immense and unparalleled inroad on the dark domain of wickedness and superstition,—it is strangely, and, I must say, very ignorantly, argued by some, that the ministers of religion through all future time should be men of the same character, equipped for their task by no special training or appropriate instruction. People forget that the New Testament does not exhibit the normal type of a Christian church for every coming age, but simply the genesis and earliest development of a great historical fact; and that as soon as the new principles of belief and thought involved in that fact passed the limits of the Jewish community where they had originated, and began to penetrate the wide-extended mass of heathen civilization, they came into living contact—as we know they did long before the end of the second century—with the philosophical speculation of the age, they raised questions, and excited doubts, and bred theories, which it tasked the learning and disciplined intellect of a Clemens, an Origen and an Hippolytus, to meet and master and allay. What happened then, has happened in every age, and happens now. Christianity is not, and cannot be made, a close, insulated element of human consciousness, shut up from the living world into the midst of which it is cast, without influence on its literature, its science and its philosophy, and unsusceptible of any impression from them in return. It stands, and it must stand, in marked and vital relationship to the whole co-existing civilization. Adequately to represent and protect it, in an age when old formulas are falling to pieces, and a restless spirit of vague scepticism widely prevails, there must be amongst its ministers some who are educated up to the highest average standard of their day,—who have made a profound and thoughtful study of the subject of their calling, as much so as the accomplished physician and lawyer have made of theirs,—who know the strong positions of their own faith, and the weak points of their assailants,—who can meet the philosophic or historical sceptic on his own ground, and repel him with his own weapons. I feel persuaded that in the times which are opening upon us, even more than in those in which we now live, no one who does not keep pace with the progressive state of sacred criticism and Christian history,—no one who does not familiarize himself with the prevalent phases of philosophic thought, and mark their bearing on the great Christian controversy, so that when they come before him, he may be prepared to deal with them calmly and intelligently, prepared to assert and defend

the full worth and authority of Christian faith, without the sacrifice of reason or the violation of science,—will be able to sustain the responsibilities and fulfil the duties of the Christian ministry to the full extent of its requirements, in the more conspicuous pulpits which are planted in the midst of intelligent and educated communities; and for this arduous vocation, which certainly awaits many of our future ministers, provision must be timely made, in a resolute and devoted spirit—the surest sign of a true humility—by close application to thorough and exact studies during the years of their academic life. Persons who have not well considered this subject, may think, perhaps, that too much of the time of young men designed for the ministry, is consumed on secular literature and science, and ask, what is the use of spending three whole years on the interpretation of the great writers of antiquity, on the formulas of mathematical analysis, on ancient and modern history, on logic and mental philosophy, before the proper studies of theology are commenced? The reply is, not that such pursuits—familiarity, I mean, with the products of those master minds that have furnished models to all ensuing time, and thorough discipline in exact modes of reasoning and expression—furnish the direct material and instrumentality of Christian teaching, but that they form those habits of mind, and give that command over the faculties, induce that clearness and discrimination of thought, and impart that power of correct and precise utterance, which render all teaching more complete and more effective; so that, although mere culture can never supply the place of superior natural endowment, and still less supersede the more important requisite of religious earnestness and religious thoughtfulness, yet, where these qualifications already exist, he who has added to them the discipline of a thorough education, will be placed in a more advantageous position than others for instructing and influencing mankind. When he goes into the world, he will feel himself more equal to his work; and yet, having been tried and tested by a searching discipline, having learned from experience the difficulties of all true knowledge, he will be less likely to be led astray by the conceit and presumption which often accompany superficial attainment, and modesty and respectful deference to the opinion of older men will balance a manly self-reliance. If it be said that such an education may turn out a scholar, but will be injurious to the preacher, I reply, that history is completely against the insinuation; that the greatest masters of pulpit eloquence in every age, whose works have become classic models in the languages in which they wrote,—Basil, Chrysostom, Augustine and the Gregories, in the early church—our own delightful Jeremy Taylor—Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Saurin and Massillon, in the most brilliant period of the old French monarchy—in more recent times, Robert Hall, Chalmers, Chan-

ning—abroad, Reinhard, Schleiermacher, Tholuck, Coquerel,—are all names which associate with the memory of great natural gifts, the highest general culture of their age. In every department of human exertion, it is always well to set a high standard before us. I would say to all young men, whatever be the line of life which they intend to pursue,—“Strive at the very highest excellence you can conceive. You will not reach it, it is true; but you will fall less below it than you would otherwise have done; and the very effort will give nobleness and elevation to your habitual aims.”

In support of what I have said on the importance of maintaining a highly educated ministry, I may observe, that on a recent visit to Geneva, I found that the course of education for ministers in the Academy of that enlightened and religious community, was quite as extended as our own, three entire years being devoted to theological studies only, and the subjects of instruction distributed between four or five professors. Among the Protestants of France, with the revival of a more earnest religious life, there has sprung up in the same degree a conviction of the necessity of a learned ministry to sustain it. I was assured by a French gentleman, a man of learning and well acquainted with the state of Protestantism in his country, that nothing is more eagerly desired by many of the friends of religious freedom and progress in France, than the foundation of a central Protestant University, which should unite in one common focus of intellectual light and moral energy, the scattered rays of learned and liberal influence which are now enfeebled by dispersion among several provincial Academies. Among those who are favourable to this scheme, the name of M. Guizot was specially mentioned; and I remember well that, somewhere in his writings, that eminent statesman has spoken of the beneficial effect which the establishment of a complete Protestant faculty of Theology in the University of Paris, must have on the diffusion of sound moral and religious principles throughout France. I mention these facts to shew that, in that part of the continent where Christianity has sunk to the lowest depths of lassitude and weakness, and by some been supposed to be almost extinct, the men who are most anxious to revive it, and to place it in its true relation to the civilization and intelligence of the age, feel strongly the necessity of bringing to it once more its ancient supports of thorough and accurate learning, and of sustaining it by an enlightened and well-instructed ministry. The sectarian composition of our own religious life forbids the entertainment of any such prospect of union for theological purposes amongst us. We must still have, for years to come, our separate theological academies; but it is a partial approach to the realization of the same great idea of a free seat of national learning, that young men of all religious persua-

sions can pursue the various branches of secular learning together in the classes of University College, with which our own Institution is now happily united; and I trust that we shall continue every year to reap more and more of the good fruits of this union, in the growth of a spirit of sound learning and Christian catholicity among our students. For with the sincerest rejoicing at the removal of the restrictions which till recently were placed at the threshold of the oldest of our Universities, and with the most ardent wish that those venerable Institutions may be more and more reformed, and rendered sources of purer and nobler influence to the minds which resort to them,—I still think they must undergo a far more searching change than any we can yet reasonably expect, and be more thoroughly disengaged from ascendant ecclesiastical influence, before they can become suitable places of education for youths whose parents attach any importance to the preservation of their Nonconformist principles, and still more before they can furnish a suitable training for the ministers of Protestant Dissenting churches.

To confirm what I have said on the importance of upholding a highly educated ministry, I need hardly remark, that if we are indifferent to it, our Dissenting brethren of other denominations are not. In no respect has the influence of the University of London and its associated Colleges been more remarkable, than in the higher tone of intellectual culture imparted to those religious bodies which have been usually deemed most indifferent to the claims of human learning. It is a significant fact, that a series of works,—the most useful, perhaps, that ever appeared in this country,—for the encouragement of classical and archæological learning, has been conducted by a gentleman of the Congregationalist denomination, closely connected through various relationships with the University of London; and that the religious body to which he belongs has the further honour of putting forth one of the most powerful quarterly journals of the present day, distinguished by its rare command of high literary and scientific talent. I say not these things grudgingly, or with one particle of envious feeling, for I rejoice from my heart at the diffusion of sound learning and a liberal spirit in all quarters, but simply to rouse ourselves to a generous emulation, and to remind us that, amidst this general movement and progress of the public mind, we have an hereditary position of no mean respectability to maintain, endeared to us by the venerable memories and the inspiring traditions of a century and a half. I trust the young men who come to profit here by the united instructions of University College and our own associated Institute, will remember these things, and find in them a powerful stimulus to honourable exertion. It would be shameful and humiliating indeed for the members of an Academy which enjoyed for the

better part of half a century the united instructions of a Well-beloved and a Kenrick, to permit it to sink, through their own apathy and indolence, from the high reputation to which the various and solid learning, the admirable judgment and the high-minded fidelity of those excellent men had deservedly raised it. Altered times will often demand an altered discipline, and old questions must frequently be encountered under new aspects; this is inevitable: but it is my fervent wish and hope, that the essential principle of our older Academies—their attachment to truth for its own sake—the breadth, freedom and catholicity of their Christian spirit—may ever be preserved unweakened and inviolate here. For myself, I should regard it as the amplest recompence of the labour and responsibility of my present office, and as the highest honour open to me, if I could feel hereafter, when the time for retirement comes, that I had been the humble means, with the assistance of my excellent colleagues, of laying the foundations of a state of academic vigour and efficiency in this place, which would afford a reasonable prospect of supplying, during the remainder of this century, a succession of men worthy of representing in the same spheres of action—though with agency wisely adjusted to the new conditions of society and the higher demands of scientific thought—the Taylors and Aikins, the Towgoods and Farmers, the Enfields and Prices, who adorned the last. Nonconformity, I am certain, has not yet accomplished its mission in this country. It has higher work yet to do; and it must be re-animated and re-ennobled for the task. The best interests of the Establishment itself require that the cause of Nonconformity should be sustained by a race of learned, enlightened, brave and vigorous men.

I have said enough on this subject. It may be thought, perhaps, that I have urged the claims of a learned ministry too exclusively; but I wished to speak out unreservedly the strong convictions that I entertain. Lest, however, I should be misunderstood, I repeat once more, what I have already conceded, that although I think it indispensable to the maintenance of Christianity in its due relation to the progressive intelligence of the world, that there should in every generation be a certain number of highly-educated ministers, yet I am far indeed from asserting that all ministers, and some even of the most honoured and useful, must be of this class. Great natural aptitude, popular sympathies, strong religious earnestness and a happy gift of utterance, may mark a man out and fit him for a particular work in the church,—for missionary efforts, for example, among the ignorant, uninstructed and unreclaimed,—the very noblest work to which a Christian mind can devote itself,—far more effectually than the most perfect discipline of an University. We may take a leaf with advantage out of the vast book of the

Roman Catholic Church. With intuitive sagacity, the heads of that communion have ever discerned the advantage of a great subdivision of ecclesiastical activity, and have cordially recognized all earnest and devoted labourers, from the simplest itinerant preacher among the poorest of the poor, to the accomplished divine equipped with all the scholarship which the collective learning of Europe could supply. The weakness of Protestantism has been its one-sidedness. On one hand, it has been disposed to throw the whole weight of the Christian ministry upon the rude impulsiveness of ignorant and unlettered men; on the other, it has made certain pedantic formalities the condition of preaching simple truths to the hearts and consciences of sinful and suffering men. There should be no rivalry and competition between these two classes of Christian ministers. There should be a free exchange of service and influence between them. Each has something to learn and something to teach. Both are equally honourable and useful in their proper function and place. The inspiration that flows direct in some highly-gifted souls from the genuine fountain of nature, is not less entitled to our admiration and our confidence than the richer and more recondite wisdom that has been distilled through the alembic of the schools. A man who is not learned in the strict sense of the word, is not therefore necessarily uninstructed. He may be educated up to the demands of his vocation, and have all the knowledge which is wanted for his specific work. Such a man, if he be earnest and intelligent, will be the last to overlook the value of *true* learning (not the pedantic sham which sometimes usurps its name), even to labourers like himself. He will see that every human endowment may be rendered of service to the cause of truth and humanity, if kept to its proper object. I think it therefore a positive advantage, when it can be so arranged, that both those who are making a learned, and those who are making a more popular, preparation for the ministry, should pass a portion of their period of education together. They will thus learn to know and respect each other, and acquire a juster idea of the nature and value of their respective labours. The scholar may beneficially temper the hardness and sharpness of some of his conclusions, under the genial influence of the native, popular sympathies of the future missionary; while the latter will often find that there are questions of obvious bearing even on practical religion, where it is of immense advantage to know the judgment of one who has thoroughly explored the original sources of knowledge, and whose mind has been exactly disciplined by scientific processes of thought. By such intercourse, both parties must greatly benefit. One will be spared the chance of superficial self-conceit, the other overcome the tendencies to a pedantic contempt and disdain. From its esta-

blishment in London, this Institution has had, still has, and for my own part I hope will continue to have, some students for the ministry who do not aspire to academic degrees, or to the character of what is properly called scholarship. We are glad to open our classes to such students. We think they promise a very valuable element of usefulness in the present condition of our churches; and I may say, on behalf of myself and my colleagues, that while we think it of the utmost importance to keep the standard of a learned ministry high, we shall always feel it a duty and a satisfaction to assist and encourage the studies of those young men who, without the advantages of exact classical and mathematical culture, desire to prepare themselves for the Christian ministry by access to our instructions on the Scriptures, on Christian History and Christian Doctrine, and on the principles of Moral and Religious Philosophy. Our great object is to fit men for the Christian ministry in its various forms; and to meet the demands of that great work adequately, there must be variety of qualification and accomplishment. This leads me to remark, before I conclude, that of the use and value of learning itself, the true test must be found, after all, in the superior efficiency with which it endues those who have acquired it, for discharging the duties of the preacher, the pastor, and the public defender of Christian truth.

Preaching is a branch of the ministerial office, as regards both the composition and the delivery of public discourses, to which, I am fully persuaded, we must henceforth pay more attention in the education of our young divines. We are behind some of our continental neighbours in this respect. At Geneva, in particular, preparation for pulpit duties forms a very important element in the academic course. Eloquence, in the highest meaning of that word, no art, I am well aware, can ever teach; it is the gift of God, and will not come at the bidding of men: and of elocution, as usually understood, the only legitimate influence seems to me purely *corrective*; the less of it appears in public speaking, the better. But there is an *eloquentia*, in a lower sense—the power of speaking forth clearly, simply and forcibly, the deep feelings and strong convictions of the individual soul, with all the characters of individuality left vividly impressed upon them—which is within the reach of every awakened intelligence and earnest nature, and which it ought to be the object of our academic discipline to cultivate. I believe every man of natural aptitude for the ministerial function, who has a serious and fervid interest in his subject, may be, and will be, eloquent in this lower sense, if in preparing himself for the pulpit he will recollect that it is his business to *speak to*, impress and influence others, not simply to write out and then *read* his own thoughts, and with this view will attend to three main points: (1) to apprehend

his subject vividly and arrange it distinctly; (2) to clothe his thoughts, as they rise up before him, in the language which grows directly out of them, in pure, genuine, unaffected English; and (3) lastly, with quiet self-possession and full command acquired by constant practice over his vocal organs, to deliver what he has so prepared in a clear, firm, natural and manly tone of voice. Such a speaker may have many defects in the eye of the artificial elocutionist; but—what is of far more importance—his inmost soul will shine through his discourse, and impress it with a character of its own. He will be understood, and he will be impressive. He will be natural, and yet, from being simply true to himself, he will not be commonplace. I am by no means of the opinion of those who think the pulpit has done its work. On the contrary, I believe it has much higher and nobler work yet to do. There are some themes of profound and exhaustless interest to the human soul, on which none can speak so appropriately, so touchingly and so solemnly, as the true minister of Christ; and an almost unbounded field of honourable exertion seems to me to lie open before those preachers of the coming generation who, understanding their position and diligently cultivating their natural gifts, shall endeavour, in the spirit of Channing, to bring the whole range of human interests within view of the pulpit, and place them in a religious light,—harmonizing with a true interpretation of our Christian faith all those pure affections and sublime aspirations which the human heart is unable to suppress, and those high scientific conclusions which the unprejudiced understanding is compelled to admit. To render possible the best fruits of pulpit eloquence, our congregations must indeed be less exacting in their demands upon their ministers. They must be content with fewer complete discourses embodying, or at least affecting to embody, original thought, and allow more time for simple instruction and colloquial address, especially with the young, which in many cases may be equally serviceable to the flock, and will prove less exhausting to the minister. On the present plan, the best minds are fairly worked out before their time, or have seriously damaged themselves by the forced reproduction, week after week, of commonplaces. In this and in other respects, where the resources of the congregation allow of it, there should be a greater subdivision of spiritual labour. In some Protestant communities abroad, three or four ministers are attached to one church. Well-directed efforts at the Academy may do something, perhaps much, to improve the character of our preaching; and this should doubtless be an object kept steadily in view: but such efforts will fail of due effect, if they are not seconded by corresponding arrangements in the constitution of our public services.

For pastoral usefulness, the capacity, it is obvious, cannot be

imparted by academic lectures. It must come from the spirit of the character, and find out spontaneously its own course of action. Yet it would be a gross misapprehension to suppose that, where the heart is religious, the richest mental culture disqualifies for that service. On the contrary, I have ever observed that, in the humblest ministrations of pastoral duty, even among the poorest and least instructed members of the church, the presence of Christian courtesy and cultivation is singularly welcome and refreshing. There are some gentle and sympathizing minds that seem specially adapted by nature to this part of the ministerial office. There is no priestly influence; it is something far higher and purer. It cannot perhaps be better described than as that of the religious friend. And a beautiful influence that is! Those who possess it are a silent blessing to the community in which they live. Continually reciprocating the holiest sympathies of our nature, such men cherish the religious life in the bosom of the church, and speak with most powerful effect in their ordinary services—less from any gift of eloquence or striking originality of mind, than from the trust which they have won for themselves in the human heart, and the simple faithfulness with which they pour their earnest words into its responsive depths. The foundation of such a character is religious fervour and devotedness; and to give room for its formation and exercise, is one of the conditions of a true preparation for the Christian ministry. In the closing years of the academic course, its peculiar offices are properly intermingled with those of study and intellectual discipline, and must be sought in the schools and missions and other philanthropic institutions connected with our churches. The transition is thus tempered from the abstractions of the Academy to the realities of human life, and the affections find their part and place in the colder theories which have occupied the understanding. It is a frequent practice at Geneva for students, after they have completed their term of theological study, to spend a year or two in the service of the Missions to Protestants scattered in Catholic lands, before they settle down as the regular pastors of a particular church. They thus learn something of the world, before they proceed to discharge on its duties and direct its aims. The Hibbert Trust recently established will afford the young men who may obtain its advantage an excellent opportunity of acquiring some further knowledge of the world, and making themselves acquainted with the opinions and practices of foreign churches, before they become the fixed ministers of a congregation.

I have spoken of it as one of the duties of a Christian minister, that he should occasionally step forward as a public defender of Christian truth; and for this very responsible task the studies of his academic course should prepare him. Controversy with

our fellow-christians, especially when they are intolerant or aggressive, sometimes becomes an imperative duty, which we cannot shrink from without pusillanimous betrayal of the truth: but it is one of difficulty, which the more a man knows and the more he has thought, the less he will be disposed to engage in lightly; and one which no very young man, before he has completed his course of preparatory study, and had time to consider questions on their various sides, ought ever to undertake. It is true, the regular and systematic exposition of Christian doctrine to the people, that they may have a clear and self-consistent intellectual basis for their religious belief, should form from the first an important branch of the instructions of every Christian minister; and this is more especially a duty in those churches which repudiate creeds and have no recognized and hereditary standard of dogmatic opinion. But controversy is a work for older and more experienced men; and the public are really indebted to those ministers of matured opinions, extensive reading and ripe judgment, who, in this metropolis, in Birmingham, in Manchester and elsewhere, have recently come forward, when duty required it, to state with gravity and courteous earnestness the evidence and claims of what they deem scriptural truth and rational piety. In these cases of unavoidable collision with our orthodox brethren, everything depends on the spirit with which the controversy is conducted, the prudence and judgment with which assertions are made, and the solid and accurate learning with which they are sustained. It requires little ability, and less knowledge, to draw an exaggerated picture of the doctrines of an opponent, and then complacently destroy a monster which has no existence but in our own imagination. I know no more offensive spectacle in this world than that of a very young divine, primed at second-hand with a number of controversial common-places, which he has only half studied and very imperfectly understands, and discharging them right and left, in the impatience of his ignorant presumption, at the respectable notabilities of other denominations, who are able to give a better reason for their errors than he can for indubitable truths. Such is not the spirit in which, to do good, controversy must henceforth be conducted. There is some reason in history, or a hidden want of the human mind, for every theological error that has long held sway in the world. Its hold could never have been so enduring and so strong, but for some element of truth which lies hidden under it, or with which it has a secret affinity. The controversy which aims at something higher than mere sectarian triumph, should seek to disengage this latent truth from its mass of encrusting errors, and prove to the many serious and good minds whom it unconsciously reconciles to those errors, that we possess, not less, but more, of it—and in a far more vital and efficacious

state—in the simpler and more rational system which we have adopted. By the rudely aggressive method, we repel religious men, and only loosen off from their communion less earnest and serious characters. By a candid construction of systems the most opposed to our own, we open a way towards gradual sympathy and a common understanding with the best minds attached to them; and though great speculative differences should continue between us (and with men who are true to themselves and honestly express their opinions, that must ever be the case), a large common ground will still be left for joint religious action and the free exchange of religious sentiment. It is in this spirit and from this point of view, without at all overlooking the very important peculiarities of belief which distinguish us from the rest of the Christian world, that the young men of this Academy will be trained to prepare themselves for such controversy as it may be necessary for them occasionally to engage in hereafter with their Christian brethren of other denominations. For this purpose, a course has been prepared, and is regularly delivered, in which the scriptural evidence is exhibited relative to the several heads of Christian doctrine; the views of different churches respecting the same stated, and compared with each other and with Scripture; and the permanent truth appearing to result from such comparison, submitted to the judgment of the student.—I have trespassed unreasonably on your time; but I wished, if possible, to convey a distinct impression of the spirit and aim of the theological studies, and of the religious training for the Christian ministry, pursued in this place.

It is one of the great advantages of the present position of Manchester New College in University Hall, that it tends to unite in common studies, and to imbue with common sentiments, our young laymen and their future ministers. An excellent feeling subsisted between these two classes of students during the whole of last session, which we trust will continue and even be increased during this. It is so important to preserve this union, that it will be well worth some efforts and sacrifices, if necessary, on both sides to maintain it. For what will avail all our exertions to turn out a succession of able and well-instructed ministers, if there shall be no influential laymen in the bosom of our churches to welcome and encourage them in after life with the common memories of academic years, and an enlightened sympathy in those glorious principles of Christian truth and of civil and religious liberty, on which they will often be called to take a common stand, to help forward, amidst conflict and opposition, the great and holy cause of civilization and humanity? I believe a race of intelligent and highminded laymen, well grounded in their religious principles, wisely honouring the memory of their forefathers, and fervently but rationally devoted

to freedom and progress, is even more indispensable at this juncture to the future prosperity of our churches, and through them to the best interests of our country at large, than even an active and learned ministry itself. At all events, a ministry, however able and zealous, will be able to do little without the aid and co-operation of such laity. I think, therefore, every exertion should be made to render the education of young laymen resorting to this Hall and studying in the classes of University College, as complete, and even as systematic, as their several tastes and aptitudes, and their different destinations in life, will allow. I should not have ventured to allude to this subject, had I not known that my friend, the Principal of University Hall, is decidedly of the same opinion, and desirous to act upon it. The students on the foundation of Manchester New College are required to pursue a prescribed course of study; and possibly the examinations which they have to undergo at the close of every term by our own officers, may indirectly facilitate the introduction of more system and method in the studies of lay students. I may say, once for all, that nothing will give the professors of Manchester New College more satisfaction, than to assist in any arrangements which may tend to improve and perfect the studies of both classes of students, and to promote a more entire harmony of spirit and aim between them. In some of our classes we shall have a special reference to the instruction of lay students. I shall myself have a class this session, every Wednesday, from three to four P.M., on the First Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, designed immediately for our own theological undergraduates, to which any lay student will have free and gratuitous access; and, if health and strength permit, I propose to continue, during the term between Christmas and Easter, the course on the History of Christianity (embracing this year the mediæval period), which I commenced last session, with a more immediate reference to the wants of lay students. I am authorized by my friend and colleague, Mr. Smith, to say that he will have a class of undergraduates this session for reading the Greek of the New Testament, to which he will be happy to admit any lay student of University Hall who may wish to attend. Lastly, there are the instructions of Mr. Martineau in Logic and Moral Philosophy, indispensable for a degree, and his own rich and original lectures on Ethics, supplying a great, though an unavoidable, deficiency in the academic system of University College.

There are many circumstances to encourage us at the opening of this session. We begin with six additional students, having lost one, Mr. Gow, who has completed his course, and settled with the congregation at Cheltenham. The laity have shewn an unwonted degree of interest in our Institution. Mr. Joseph Yates, of Liverpool, has offered two prizes to be awarded this

session,—one, for the greatest proficiency in Hebrew, to students in the two first years of the Theological course; and another, for the greatest proficiency in Latin studies and Latin composition, to undergraduates in their two first years,—this last prize being open to competition from the lay students of University Hall. Mr. Ainsworth, of Cleator, offers a prize of £100 to any student of Manchester New College who shall obtain the Gold Medal on taking his M.A. degree in the University of London. Lastly, there are the Hibbert Scholarships, already alluded to, which offer such rare opportunities for completing and perfecting a course of preparation for the Christian ministry. On the endeavours of our active and zealous friends in the North to train up a class of Christian missionaries for that important part of the kingdom, we look with no disfavour or ill-will. We heartily wish them success in their praiseworthy efforts; and cherish the hope that, if we each keep to our proper field and do our proper work, we shall not prove rivals, but assistants to one another—each contributing its own element of health and vigour to the religious community to which we both belong, and to that great cause of Christian truth and liberty which it is our common desire to serve.

At the same time, I should disguise my real feelings in respect to the situation in which I have been placed, if, while I look forward with predominant hope to the future, I denied that that hope is mingled with some anxiety and a painful sense of responsibility. We who conduct this Institution must throw ourselves largely on the candour and sympathy of the public. They must not be too impatient for immediate results. Time is required for the maturing of all things. Good fruit cannot be raised in a day. I have stated in this address what are and will be our incessant aims; but you must take that statement as the measure of what we desire, not of what we can hope completely to effect. Our best endeavours may fall short of the expected result; and, owing to the very different aspects under which the same truth presents itself to different minds, the expression of our deepest and most serious conviction on the most important subjects may be altogether misunderstood. In the present state of men's minds, when so many questions are yet in suspense, and research is prosecuted in every direction with such unceasing activity, and no honest man can close his mind to the results that are evolved,—there is no higher and more imperative duty than that of a large and candid construction of each other's motives and views, where there is evidence of sincerity and earnestness and a cordial reception of the fundamental truths of Christianity. If we, according to the different points of view which we have each conscientiously adopted, and the existence of which is inseparable from the intellectual working of a free religious community, will so judge

each other, and unite our efforts for the promotion of a vital and practical Christianity,—a Christianity which renews and cleanses the heart and beautifies the outward life, and consecrates both to God in the spirit of its blessed author,—then I do not doubt that we shall finally overcome our difficulties and heal all our schisms, and wisely and zealously availing ourselves of the favourable conjunctures of the times—through our schools, our colleges, our pulpits, and the thousand agencies of Christian faith and love in the private relations of life—become the means, by the help and encouragement of God's good spirit, of gradually introducing a more prosperous condition of Christian truth, freedom and virtue, than either we or our fathers have yet been permitted to behold.

